



# *The Wildfire Resilient Communities Act*

*Senator Jeffrey A. Merkley (D-OR)*

## ***Background***

Due to hotter and drier climate through much of the West, the risk of severe and catastrophic fires continues to grow and wildfire “season” keeps getting longer. Despite historic funding to address the problem, the Forest Service and Department of Interior still need additional funding and boots on the ground to implement badly needed fuels-reduction projects—even though more than 2 million acres in Oregon have already been cleared for this work.

Senator Merkley introduced the Wildfire Resilient Communities Act to provide dedicated federal support to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire across federal agencies and empower communities to prepare for wildfire.

## ***Legislation***

The Wildfire-Resilient Communities Act would create economic opportunities in forest-dependent communities while reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfires by:

- **Supporting Wildfire Reduction Projects:** A \$30 billion fund would be used to provide stability and allow the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and other land management agencies to increase the pace and scale of catastrophic wildfire reduction projects.
- **Working with Local Communities:** This legislation would reauthorize and triple the funding to up to \$3 billion for the Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program, helping local communities to plan and prepare for wildfires.
- **Reauthorizing Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Projects:** This legislation would permanently reauthorize the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program, allowing more projects to receive funding in a given fiscal year.
- **Creating a County Stewardship Fund:** This legislation would create a County Stewardship Fund that would provide payments to counties equal to 25 percent of stewardship contract receipts on federal land within their counties.